

# Cover Girl

Her attractive face  
was featured on the cover of nearly every  
magazine and tabloid in the world!

*How could I get her attention?*

Wintley Phipps buckled his seat belt and turned toward the window to catch a last glimpse of the California landscape as the plane taxied down the runway. The airline attendant had assigned him to a seat in the first-class compartment. Apparently the airline had overlooked the nonsmoking section that he had requested. Later he would know that God had placed him there for a purpose.

He sighed and tried to relax. It had been a busy trip with scheduled concerts in various places. In a few short hours he would be on the opposite side of the United States in Atlanta, singing before thousands of people.

The plane vibrated as it gathered speed for takeoff. Wintley leaned back and glanced around at his fellow passengers. Most of them looked like successful businesspeople, probably employed by some huge corporation.

One woman sitting ahead of him looked vaguely familiar. He stared for a moment and then shook his head in disbelief. Her accomplishments included the lead role in a musical that won the coveted Oscar. Her face graced the cover of nearly every magazine and tabloid in the world.

"I wonder," he mused to himself, "if all of her wealth and fame brings happiness? Does she know what it is like to have God as a friend?"

*"Tell her about Me."* The voice seemed so clear and the impression so strong that Wintley looked around to see if anyone else heard it.

"How can I approach her on a plane?" He silently argued back.

*"Use the talent that I have given you."* The impression came again with greater clarity.

Breathing a silent prayer, he stepped across the aisle and knelt by her seat.

"Hello," he tried to sound warm and at ease. "I feel impressed of God to give you this tape that I have recorded. The song title is *'Lord, I Give You My Life.'* It is my song of commitment and consecration."

She smiled, and for a moment he marveled at her beauty.

"Thank you," she said simply. "I travel with earphones and a small cassette player. I'll listen to it now."

He returned to his seat and bowed his head. "Thank you, Lord," he prayed silently. "Please speak to her through my music."

The rest of the trip passed uneventfully. Wintley spent most of his time reflecting on God's leading. Each concert, each opportunity to present his testimony seemed like a fresh miracle straight from the throne of God.

It wasn't as if he had dreamed of a career in music, although his mother had filled the house with song as far back as he could remember. In fact the possibility never entered his mind until his voice changed at age 14.

Tom Jones and Marvin Gaye had been his heroes then. He listened to their music constantly and day-dreamed about being like them. Finally the day came when he met Tom Jones face-to-face. The famous musician didn't look happy or stable.

When Wintley was 16, the dean at King's College had suggested that he try the Lord. Kneeling down alone in his room, he had prayed, "I open my life to You, Lord. No matter what You want, I'll do it. I'll be a garbage man as long as You are by my side."

The pilot's voice interrupted his thoughts. "Please fasten your seat belts for landing."

She stood waiting for him at the gate. There were tears in her eyes as she took his hand into hers and squeezed it. "Thank you so much and God bless you," she said and then hurried away. Within seconds she melted into the crowd.

A few days later Wintley Phipps picked up the morning newspaper. The headlines seemed to leap off the page and tear at his soul as he remembered the woman he had spoken to on the plane:

*"Natalie Wood Drowns."*

Natalie Wood, actress and model, drowned in a yachting accident November 29, 1981. She was 43. This story was published in *Insight Magazine*, October 31, 1992. Used by Permission

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